9:Fosbrooke G-5 (1936-1948) 1948 FL12 Masai FL12
Kisonko

It is impossible here to digress at length into the realms of pure archaeology, with reference to the Olduwai man, obsidian flakes, etc., but any evidence which throws light on the type of life that the country supported prior to Masai occupation is of interest in relation to the type of culture which the Masai may be expected to attain.

Briefly, then, the evidence shows that immediately below the Rift Wall cultivation under irrigation was practised, and that east of the Rift the country had at one time been inhabited by a tribe fully acquainted with the arts of well-digging and dam-building. These people may have practised agriculture, but there is no evidence to show that they did; their water conservation measures certainly show them as being cattle keepers, since no agricultural community, drawing domestic water only, would sink 50 or 60 wells in one small area, as at Naberera. That a cattle owning community requires such numbers is obvious from the fact that the Masai use nearly every prehistoric well, and have opened many new ones in addition. These same people were possibly responsible for the dams on the south-east flank of Monduli mountain, and perhaps they constructed the irrigation system which the Chagga are alleged to have found on Kilimanjaro.

But the people who dug the Naberera, Makami, Ndedo, Ngasumet and Londergess wells were most certainly pure pastoralists, and were probably responsible for the construction of the rain ponds in this area. A rain pond, liable to dry up, is obviously as useless to a settled agricultural population, as a group of twenty or thirty wells in a confined area. But to a pastoral people two such sources of water in conjunction enable an otherwise inhospitable country to carry a large cattle population.

The only available evidence of settled habitation in the southern area is found near Makami and Londergess. In concentrated areas, one at each of these places, are to be found numerous large kitchen middens, composed of ash and refuse, and containing numerous pot-sherds, bones, and — most important of all — the clay mouths of native bellows, and the clinkers formed when iron ore is smelted.

Thus, throughout the whole of Masai District, the only signs of settlement are associated either with agriculture under irrigation, or with metal work. The rest of the evidence points to the fact that the country was inhabited by nomadic pastoralists. For this reason any other mode of living cannot be expected from the Masai unless by the provision of water a radical change is made in the environment.

B. Sub-tribes and Sections: Sub-tribes — Sections — Kenya Sections — Sections common to Kenya and Tanganyika — Laitayok, clan or section? — Salei — Serenget — Engaruka — Kissongo — Kiteto — Molbo.

The early history of the tribe has been summarized above; before turning to recent history, i.e. events occurring within living memory, it is necessary to define the sub-tribes and sections of the Masai, as a record of recent events is mainly a chronicle of civil war and strife between such units.

19: Talbot E-4,5 (1956-1962)1964 FL12 Masai FL12

133
172

Figure 10.

Olduvai Gorge, Serengeti Plain, Tanganyika. View is south past exposed Pleistocene water-laid tuffs and other lake beds, the Olduvai Beds in which the artifacts of the Oldowan and Chelles-Acheulian cultures and the "Olduvai Man" have been found.